

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SY-05

SCCT-01 DHA-02 EB-07 IO-11 /091 W

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R 081150Z APR 76

FM AMCONSUL ASMARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3923

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

INFO AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY ROME

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON

COMNAVTELCOM WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE

COMIDEASTFOR

NAVCOMMUNIT ASMARA

NAVCOMMSTA NEA MAKRI

CNO WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ASMARA 0303

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS ET

PAGE 2 RUFTEFA5303 C O N F I D E N T I A L

SUBJECT: INTERVIEW WITH ITALIAN CONSUL

1. ON APRIL 7 DPO CALLED ON ITALIAN CONSUL VITO NAPOLEONE, WHO IS IN CHARGE OF ITALIAN CONSULATE AS CG DIAZ IS CURRENTLY IN ROME SEEKING HIS OWN REPLACEMENT FOR ASMARA. NAPOLEONE APPEARED MORE RELAXED THAN IN PAST MEETINGS AS PROBLEMS OF ITALIAN CITIZENS IN ERITREA ARE SOMEWHAT LESS PRESSING THAN IN RECENT PAST. BURGLARIES OF ITALIANS' HOMES HAVE ENDED, AND THOUGH SEVERAL
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ITALIANS WERE HARRASSED DURING LAST WEEK'S REPRISALS BY ETHIOPIAN

ARMY, THEY SUFFERED NO PERSONAL ORATERIAL INJURY.

2. RE ITALIAN CITIZEN ERNESTO DEBENI, FORMER GENERAL MANAGER OF SAVON RIES SHIPPING AGENTS, FOLLOWING HIS SENTENCING TO LIFE IMPRISONMENT, HE HAS BEEN TRANSFERRED TO ADDIS ALONG WITH 34 OTHER PRISONERS. AT PRODDING OF ITALIAN OFFICIALS, DEBENI HAS BEEN CONFINED TO PRISON INFIRMARY TO RECOVER HIS STRENGTH. LETTER REQUESTING PARDON AND EXPULSION OF DEBENI FROM ITALIAN PRESIDENT LEONE HAS BEEN FORWARDED TO ITALIAN EMBASSY FOR IMMINENT TRANSMISSION TO EPMG CHAIRMAN TEFERI BANTI.

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PAGE 3 RUFTEFA5303 C O N F I D E N T I A L

3. RE LOCAL SITUATION, NAPOLEONE SEEMED TO BELIEVE PRESENT QUIET WOULD HOLD AS INSURGENTS REMAIN FRAGMENTED. HE REPORTED THAT SAVA GLASS FACTORY HAS FOUND INTERIM SOURCE OF SILICONE SAND AFTER EFFORTS TO OBTAIN SAND LOCALLY FAILED IN EARLY MARCH. TABACCHI CERAMIC INDUSTRIES, LOCAL TILE MAKER, HAS TURNED OVER AT LEAST TWO MONTHS SUPPLY OF SAND TO SAVA WHICH SHOULD BE ADEQUATE UNTIL SUPPLY FROM FOREIGN SOURCE CAN BE ARRANGED.

4. NAPOLEONE MENTIONED THAT DURING HIS RECENT VACATION IN ROME HE HAD OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK WITH ERITREAN KIDNAP VICTIM FALASCHI. NAPOLEONE DID NOT GO INTO DETAIL, BUT DID SAY FALASCHI'S ABDUCTORS WERE ATTACKED "MORE THAN 10 TIMES" BY EPMG AIR FORCE WITH NO CASUALTIES EVEN TO PACK ANIMALS. FURTHER FALASCHI SAID HE SAW VAST SUPPLIES OF FOOD, MEDICINE AND SMALL ARMS IN CAVE AROUND KARORA AREA, BUT NO HEAVIER WEAPONS SUCH AS MORTARS, ROCKET LAUNCHERS OR ANTI-AIRCRAFT ARTILLERY.
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